



THE GESHEREU SUPPORT NETWORK

Registered Charity Number 1157062

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31st December 2021

Registered Address:
21 Maple Street
London, W1T 4BE

THE GESHEREU SUPPORT GROUP

Trustees' Annual Report 2021

TRUSTEES

Bernard, Robert	Appointed 11 th November 2020
Weber, Peter	Appointed 11 th November 2020
Lewis, David	Appointed 11 th November 2020
Name withheld by agreement with Charity Commission	Appointed 11 th November 2020

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The activities of the Charity are governed by its Constitution dated 4th May 2014.

STRUCTURE

The Charity commenced activities on 1st January 2014 and those involved at the start agreed to formalise the organisation by registering with the UK Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) whose voting members are its charity trustees. The registration was completed on 15th May 2014. This is the eighth annual report.

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Apart from the first charity trustees, every trustee must be appointed by resolution passed at a meeting of the charity trustees. Every trustee so appointed must satisfy the eligibility requirements as set out in the constitution.

OBJECTIVES

The objects of the charity set out in the constitution are as follows:-

'To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people of all ages who have been raised in or have spent a significant part of their lives in strict closed religious communities (in particular ultraorthodox Jewish communities) and having left their communities, from remaining socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society and to do all such other things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.'

For the purpose of this clause 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors: unemployment; financial hardship; youth or old age; ill health (physical or mental); substance abuse or dependency including alcohol and drugs; discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed, sexual orientation or gender reassignment; poor educational or skills attainment; relationship and family breakdown; poor housing (that is housing that does not meet basic habitable standards); crime (either as a victim of crime or as an offender rehabilitating into society).'

MAIN ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees have satisfied themselves that GesherEU's activities are compliant with law and guidance for charities on public benefit. The charity's charitable purposes are set out in the 'OBJECTIVES' above. In planning our activities for the year we have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at our trustee meetings.

The activities described in the section below are focused on:

- 1) Rebuilding a community for each individual who has lost contact with family and friends from the community in which he or she grew up. Many of our service users now keep in touch with each other outside meetings. The use of a secure WhatsApp group and secret Facebook group both restricted to those who attend GesherEU has continued to be popular and improves communications outside meetings.
- 2) Have contact in social settings, with volunteers of all ages, who have not come from a Charedi background. This enables service users to build a network of friends and contacts that do not originate from their old communities and introduces them to cultural "protocols" with which they are not familiar. It also helps them develop colloquial language skills.
- 3) Introduce service users to concepts and culture (art, theatre, science, sports etc.) with which they did not grow up.
- 4) Supporting service users through the family court system. However, we do not finance legal costs from core funds.
- 5) Giving the GesherEU community a voice.

Often the above activities overlap or are combined.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR

GesherEU has continued to operate within its financial means and has been effective in both strengthening the GesherEU community and helping individuals. During the year there has been a continuing increase (approximately one or two, most months) in the number of individuals using the services of GesherEU. They range in age from 20 - 46, with approximately an equal number of men and women.

We continue to welcome these new service users, some of whom are just starting their journey into the wider community and others who have been living outside of the Charedi community for a number of years. New service users continue to come from across the various Charedi communities with the vast majority now living in Barnet, Harrow and Manchester/Salford. Moving into a new world remains a challenging process and we have had many calls from those who never make the move.

We continue to encourage service-users to engage with governmental bodies as part of our efforts to give them a voice. We cooperate with other charities where appropriate. Our concerns are primarily with education provision and arranged marriages at an early age (18-20) as these are significant obstacles to our service users exercising their choice to lead a lifestyle of their choosing.

During this year, GesherEU continued to benefit from a Trust for London grant to fund a community coordinator and a number of smaller grants including one from JJBS. We thank them all for their support.

The social sessions are a key starting place for service users to make new connections to replace those lost when family and friends break off contact when individuals leave or are forced to leave their communities. We started the year with bi-monthly 'drop-in' sessions, weekend visits and Friday night meals.

Due to COVID-19 our sessions for most of the year were mainly online via Zoom. These sessions have been very successful in keeping service-users in touch with each other and have continued to enable us to widen their horizons by welcoming session leaders from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures and professions. The variety of session types has attracted a very good attendance from service-users in London, Manchester, as well as those away at University and who have moved to Israel and the USA. Towards the end of the year we were able to re-establish face-to-face activities, many outdoors, as prescribed by the prevailing legislation and advice.

With a continuing significant donor commitment we have been able to offer professional counselling to a number of service users from two counsellors who have undertaken training in the impact of leaving high control communities.

Again this year, we have provided emotional and practical support to a number of individuals as they negotiate the family court system. Our volunteer social worker continues to meet service users and provides invaluable guidance.

We have again helped a number of service users with small zero interest loans or bursaries (or a combination). A number have lost income and employment due to the series of lockdowns and restrictions in place over the year. We prioritise those that will help in earning a living in the short or longer term but also help in emergency situations such as an unexpected cut in or non-payment of benefits. We see this as replacing the family support our service users no longer enjoy and believe our rapid assessment process has prevented use of high cost alternatives that may be the start of a debt crisis. We see a high adherence to repayment schedules which enables us to help others. Education has continued to be a focus for our support this year.

CHALLENGES

The COVID-19 restrictions have continued to make it very difficult to integrate new service-users into the GesherEU community. Zoom is not the best place to get to know new people and make new friends. With the lifting of restrictions however, we look forward to them cementing relationships and towards the end of the year, started to plan for our residential and in person events in 2022.

We continue to see service-users struggle to catch up on their education. Although we have relationships with organisations that can give tuition, the need to work in low paid jobs in order to pay high rents leaves little time and energy to catch up some 15 years of missed education.

We have seen little real change in the education of service users leaving the community. We are still being contacted by young men with not a single recognised qualification nor having effective spoken or written English skills. We need to seek new ways of ensuring that those responsible give all young people emerging from Charedi communities the life skills they require to function in the outside world.

POLICY ON RESERVES

The charity does not intend to build up reserves other than those required to ensure that it can meet its day to day expenses and budgeted projects.

TRUSTEE APPROVAL

The trustees declare that they approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Bernard', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ROBERT BERNARD
Trustee
22nd February 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Weber', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PETER WEBER
Trustee – Hon Treasurer
22nd February 2022

THE GESHEREU SUPPORT NETWORK (Charity number 1157062)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE GESHEREU SUPPORT NETWORK

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of The GesherEU Support Network (the Trust) for the year ended 31st December 2021 which are set out on pages 7 and 8.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act: or
2. the accounts did not accord with the accounting records: or
3. the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Donald Glazer B.A, F.C.A.

8 Darnhills, Watford Road, Radlett, WD7 8LQ

Date: 29th January 2022

THE GESHEREU SUPPORT NETWORK

Registered Charity number 1157062

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2021

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS	GENERAL FUNDS £	DESIGNATED FUNDS £	RESTRICTED FUNDS £	TOTAL 2021 £	TOTAL 2020 £
Income from Charitable Activities					
Loans & Advances repaid	0	1,890	0	1,890	2,318
Income from Shabbat & Festival Events	0	340	0	340	0
Income from Residential Events	0	810	0	810	830
Income from other Events	0	565	0	565	60
Sub Total	0	3,605	0	3,605	3,208
Voluntary Income Sources					
Donations received	484	9,000	0	9,484	17,634
Grants received	0	6,000	7,100	13,100	23,200
Gift Aid	220	1,375	1,750	3,345	224
Sub Total	704	19,980	8,850	29,534	44,266
Other Income					
Interest	3	0	0	3	17
Total Receipts	£707	£19,980	£8,850	£29,537	£44,283
PAYMENTS					
Charitable Activities					
Emergency Support	0	2,914	0	2,914	2,535
Emergency Advances	0	2,604	0	2,604	3,600
Educational Support	0	2,150	4,558	6,708	4,545
Shabbat & Festival Dinners	0	2,153	0	2,153	430
Counselling Support	0	7,130	0	7,130	2,880
Drop-Ins & Socials Exp (incl virtual events)	0	108	1,395	1,503	671
Community Development Project	0	0	9,099	9,099	7,336
Expenditure on Residential Events	0	2,019	4,347	6,366	474
Expenditure on other events	0	1,795	0	1,795	393
Sub Total	0	20,873	19,399	40,272	22,864
Operating Costs					
Insurance	191	0	0	191	191
Telephone	43	0	262	305	43
Travel Expenses	3	0	0	3	0
Bank & Credit Card charges	21	0	0	21	37
Sub Total	258	0	262	520	271
Total Payments	£258	£20,873	£19,661	£40,792	£23,135
Surplus for the Period	449	(893)	(10,811)	(11,255)	21,148
Cash & Bank Balances at 1st January	2,242	17,229	19,837	39,308	18,160
Balances at 31st December	£2,691	£16,336	£9,026	£28,053	£39,308

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Monetary Assets

Bank Current Account
Bank Deposit Account
Paypal Account
Soldo Accounts

Balances at 31st December

2021 £	2020 £
671	654
26,432	37,930
30	4
920	720
£28,053	£39,308

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NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2021

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements of the charity have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis and generally in accordance with the latest Charities Statement of Recommended Practice and The Charities Act 2011

Funds and Reserves

General funds represent the funds of the charity that are not subject to special restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes.

Designated Funds are held at the discretion of the trustees and therefore Unrestricted.

Restricted Funds are held to be used specifically in accordance with the donor's instructions

2. DESIGNATED FUNDS

	Balance 1 Jan 2021 £	Transfers Gen Funds £	Received in 2021 £	Paid out in 2021 £	Balance 31 Dec 2021 £
Emergencies Fund - Grants	3,043	3,000	0	2,914	3,129
Emergencies Fund - Advances	718	1,000	1,890	2,604	1,004
Educational Enablement	3,644	500	0	2,150	1,994
Shabbat/Festival Dinners	927	1,500	340	2,153	614
Counselling	1,095	0	9,375	7,130	3,340
Drop-Ins & Socials Expenses	1,259	0	0	108	1,151
Residential Events	4,196	500	810	2,019	3,487
Other Events	2,347	500	565	1,795	1,617
	£17,229	£7,000	£12,980	£20,873	£16,336

3. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance 1 Jan 2021 £	Received in 2021 £	Paid out in 2021 £	Balance 31 Dec 2021 £
Trust for London	13,637	7,100	15,104	5,633
Educational Fund	6,200	1,750	4,557	3,393
	£19,837	£8,850	£19,661	£9,026

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



Robert Bernard



Peter Weber

29th January 2022